

Why Motorkhana?

You start out in motorsport driving your everyday car. You try some club trials/rallies and blow up the engine or break the suspension or knock the exhaust off or damage the panels and suspension against a rock/bank/ditch/tree. Or you try speed events and blow up the engine or destroy the tyres or lose the gearbox or damage the panels and suspension against a fence. I did some of the above and couldn't afford the cost of repairs and not having the car to get to work.

You overcome these little troubles with determination and effort, you're showing real driving ability, but you lack the most important attribute for racing or rally success - a wallet that needs a ladder to climb over. I ran into this barrier too - and switched to motorkhanas.

A motorkhana looks a bit Mickey Mouse but looks can be deceiving. Someone who does it well makes it look easy, but it takes years of effort to get to that level. When you are out there, it all happens very quickly. It's a serious challenge if you want to win and plenty of fun if you don't care about winning. The atmosphere is friendly and no-one will criticize or laugh at you if you are slow, though they may try to help you to improve.

I can't deny it - motorkhanas are cheap. You can use a standard road car with a little risk of breaking the car or yourself if you drive sensibly. For a year's sport, you need a CAMS licence at \$46 (\$11 for juniors), club membership, about \$50 (juniors pay less), and entry fees of about \$10 to \$20 (half price for juniors) per event.

In my first 7 years, I used my road cars with some success. Now I use a specially built car which owes me well under \$10,000, and is fast enough to reach the podium at the Australian Championship. I currently enter about 16 motorkhanas a year including the Australian Championship and all the Victorian Championship events. This makes for a busy year and is on an annual budget of about \$3000 including tyres, car maintenance, entry fees, CAMS licence, travel and accommodation.

Motorkhanas are also safe with speeds rarely exceeding 60 kmh, but they sure feel fast when you're weaving between the flags on a twisty test. They are also very satisfying on the rare occasion that a test goes exactly as you intended.

You can enter up to 30 events per year in Victoria. Apart from club events, you can enter some non-series multiclub events, nine Group 5 motorkhanas or ten State Championship ones. Most regular drivers settle for about 12. Don't be deterred from entering State events. Plenty of non-experts enter them for the enjoyment of driving in competition in a well run event in a friendly atmosphere. There are separate classes for various sizes of road cars, specials, juniors (12 to 17), ladies and novices so it's not hard to win a trophy.

If you are interested in finding out more about motorkhanas, email me at motorkhana1@gmail.com or ring me on 03 9744 6874 and I'll send you "Getting Started in Motorkhana" and a monthly newsletter, Victorian Motorkhana News.

These days, I have to close by saying that I will not be held responsible if you choose to motorkhana and do some damage to persons or property - it's your decision and your actions. All motorsport is dangerous to some extent, but motorkhanas are the safest motorsport I know of.

Cheers,
Bill McCarthy